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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
**INFORMATION REPORT**

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COUNTRY Indochina  
SUBJECT Port Information on Haiphong

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The following report contains information relative to the current state of hydrography, pilotage, labor, docking, and other accommodations at the port of Haiphong.

- Location:** The port of Haiphong is situated at the far end of the Gulf of Tonkin, on the southern bank of the Kua-Kam River, 19 miles from the entrance of the estuary. It lies in Latitude 20° 52' N, Longitude 106° 41' E.
- Approaches:** Approaches to the Entrance Buoy, #0 at Latitude 20° 42' 26" N, Longitude 106° 56' 23" E, are adequately described in H.O. Publication #125. Both lighthouses on Norway Island and on the Island of Hon Dau are in operation at present, but hostilities may cause the lights to be extinguished at any time. During the day there are numerous islands from which cross bearings may be obtained. These islands also make perfect radar targets. Particularly suitable is "Rocher du Large," a small but high rock which stands all by itself and on which radar bearings can be taken with almost pin-point accuracy.
- Hydrographic:** There is generally only one high and one low tide every twenty-four hours. The present minimum depth at lowest low water on the bar Kua Nam Trieu Channel is 15 feet. The depth at lowest low water in the turning basin upstream from the piers at Haiphong Port is also 15 feet. Vessels drawing more than 15 feet are maneuvered according to the stage of the tide. Maximum safe draft at the bar is 19 feet practically the whole year around; 22 feet for twenty-two days out of thirty, and 25 feet is the maximum draft at highest high tide. For making accurate determinations of depth, add 15 feet to the tide according to tide tables.
- Climate:** The climate is almost tropical for most of the year, although occasionally during the winter the temperature drops to 50 degrees Fahrenheit. The rainy season is from August to September, and the most fog will be experienced in February and March. Some fog is also in evidence during the months of January and April.

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5. Anchorage: Vessels anchor about two miles south of the Entrance Buoy in 30-40 feet of water. The following anchor bearings are recommended: Entrance Buoy bearing 360° and Hon Dau Lighthouse bearing 265°. The holding ground is soft mud and very good. Due to the present hostilities, any approaching motorboat or junk should be kept under close surveillance while the vessel is at anchor.
6. Pilotage: Pilotage is compulsory. There are at present eight pilots available. All are former French shipmasters or ex-naval officers, and all speak good English. They are quite capable and handle the ships efficiently both in docking and while under way in the river. There are three pilot boats, wooden launches about fifty feet in length. They are painted light gray and carry no identification other than the 'H' flag. Their names ("Pilote Pothin", "Pilote Delferie", and "Pilote Tromelave.") are displayed only on the sterns. Pilots board vessels in the vicinity of the Entrance Buoy. The pilot station at Hon Dau is not presently used by pilots as a result of an attack on that island by Viet-Minh forces in January 1951. The pilots were killed in the attack and their vessels captured. Vessels now bound for Haiphong must request the services of a pilot from their agents in the port via commercial radio channels. The request will be passed to the pilot station in Haiphong, and a pilot boat will meet the ship near the Entrance Buoy at the anchorage. Vessels will at present be piloted only during daylight hours.
7. Tugs: There are three tugs available of 300-600 horsepower. Most vessels are docked without the aid of tugs; however, it is necessary to employ tugs while unmooring.
8. Lighterage: There are many lighters and native craft available for cargo operations. The lighters range in size from 50 to 100 tons.
9. Docking Facilities: The wharfage length consists of quays numbered from 1 to 6 and can accommodate eight medium-sized vessels of about 350 feet in length. The quays are dredged and the depths alongside vary from 11.6 feet at Quay #3 to 26.3 feet at Quay #6. The latter quay can easily accommodate a vessel of a C-3 type. Cargo is discharged on most of the quays into small railroad cars, pushed by coolies and is also discharged into motor lorries. Vessels also moor at the buoys, usually when carrying bulk cargo. The depths there vary from 10.5 feet to 23 feet. All cranes on the dock were destroyed during the war, and none have been replaced up to the present time. One floating crane is available with a lifting power of 50 tons.
10. Labor: All stevedores working on the ships are Chinese, and on the quays they are all Vietnamese, fifty percent of the latter being women. Supervisory personnel are all Chinese, and the tally clerks are mostly Chinese. On the whole, labor must be considered good as compared to other Far Eastern ports. Stevedore working hours are presently as follows: 0700-1100, 1400-1800, 1900-2300. Extension can sometimes be granted until 0300 hours. There is very little pilferage in evidence while vessels are alongside the quays due to the strict military guard both on the quays and at the dock gates.
11. Repairs: Minor marine repairs can be effected at a boat yard which has very limited facilities. There is no drydock in Haiphong.
12. Water: The quays have no water connections and the water is supplied by barges. The quality of the water is only fair and should be boiled prior to use for drinking purposes.
13. Fuel: Stanvac and Shell can supply only a limited amount of fuel oil. Permission must first be obtained from the proper authorities and then only enough fuel will be supplied to enable a ship to reach the next port where fuel is available.

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14. Supplies: Supplies are presently very expensive as they must be purchased at the official rate of exchange.
15. Medical: The French Army Hospital accepts seamen. There are also several private doctors and a small private hospital, "Clinique du Docteur Fr. squet."
16. Transportation: There is a railway connecting Haiphong with Hanoi, about 65 miles away, but due to the present hostilities the train service is very unreliable. Haiphong has regular steamship service to Hong Kong and to ports in Vietnam. "Air Vietnam" serves major cities in Vietnam still under that government's control. Hong Kong is served by "Cathay Pacific Airways."
17. Radio Communication: There is a radio station in Haiphong. Its call letters are "XVG," not "FRG" and the calling frequency is 500 kcs. with a working frequency of 477 kcs.

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